



JUSTICE IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

Design and Culture Change working groups
Visits to Rikers Island

May 15, 2018

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and goals for the day**
2. Focus on visits
3. Closing and next steps



GOALS

1. Review feedback on improvements to visits and DOC initiatives
2. Advance discussion of strategies for improving visits on Rikers Island

AGENDA

1. Welcome and goals for the day
2. **Focus on visits**
 1. **DOC shuttle pilot**
 2. Strategies for improving visits: recommendations
3. Closing and next steps

FEEDBACK ON DOC SHUTTLE PILOT

A promotional poster for the Rikers Visit Bus service. The background is dark blue with a faint map of New York City. At the top left, there's a street sign for Lexington Ave and Jay St. Below it, a white bus with 'VISIT BUS' written on its side is shown. To the right of the bus, the text 'Starting April 25th' is in a yellow banner. Below that, the 'CORRECTION DEPARTMENT CITY OF NEW YORK' logo is visible. The main title 'Rikers Visit Bus' is in large, bold, orange letters. Below the title, it says 'NYCDOC will be providing FREE transport TO and FROM Central Visits on Rikers Wednesday through Sunday during visit hours'. Underneath, it lists '2 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS': Harlem (On East 125th St. at 3rd Avenue) and Brooklyn (On Jay St., between Fulton St. and Willoughby St.). Each location has a small map icon. At the bottom, it provides route times and a link to the bus schedule.

Starting April 25th

Jay St-MetroTech St
A C F R

CORRECTION DEPARTMENT
CITY OF NEW YORK

Rikers Visit Bus

NYCDOC will be providing **FREE** transport **TO** and **FROM** Central Visits on Rikers Wednesday through Sunday during visit hours

2 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

Harlem
On East 125th St. at 3rd Avenue.

Brooklyn
On Jay St., between Fulton St. and Willoughby St.

The typical one-way route time is 45 min for the Harlem stop and 60 min for the Brooklyn stop. This is subject to changing traffic conditions and therefore times may vary from those provided in the schedule as we expand this new service.

View bus schedule at: <https://on.nyc.gov/2qKRGbD>

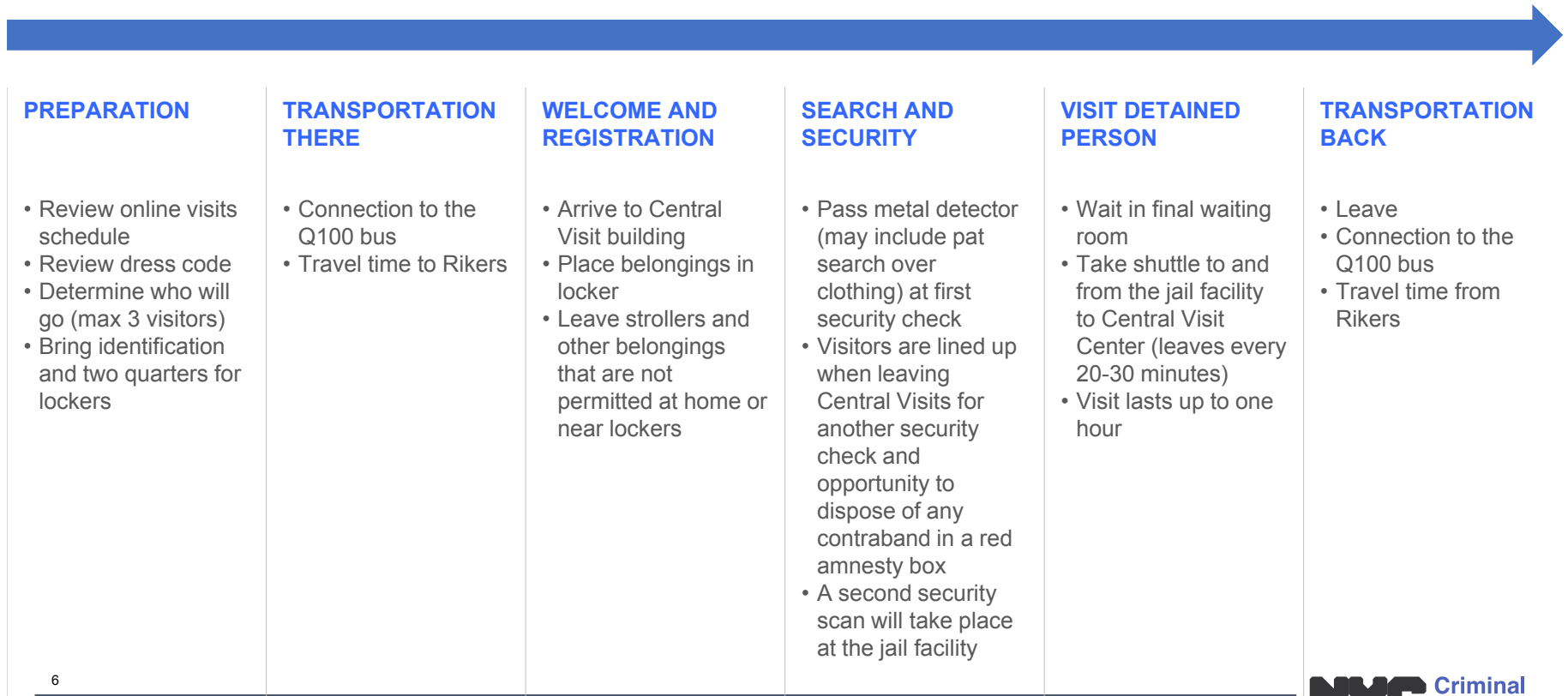
*All buses will be ADA compliant and staffed by drivers with Vision Zero training.

Thank you for your feedback!

- Information sharing
- Scaling the service
- Staffing

VISITS TO RIKERS ISLAND

Visitor journey map



AGENDA

1. Welcome and goals for the day
- 2. Focus on visits**
 1. DOC shuttle pilot
 - 2. Strategies for improving visits: recommendations**
3. Closing and next steps

SURVEY RESPONSES: RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS TO VISITS

<i>Key areas identified by the group for focus</i>	
Design	Strategies for ensuring the physical visit space is conducive to safe, positive interactions
Information	Strategies for ensuring visitors and detained people are informed about the process
Activities	Strategies for engaging detained people, visitors, and communities
Operations	Suggested policy changes for DOC's consideration
Data reporting	Strategies for data collection and measurement of results

SURVEY RESPONSES: RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR VISITS

		<i>Design Principles</i>			
		Strengthen Community and Family	Promote Safety and Security	Foster Safe and Positive Social Interaction	Ease and Broaden Access to Resources
Key areas for focus	Design	✓	✓	✓	
	Information	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Activities	✓	✓	✓	
	Operations	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Data reporting		✓	✓	



RECOMMENDATIONS: DESIGN

Improvements to the physical visit spaces

- Make visiting spaces child-friendly by providing books, toys, games, and healthy snack options at both men's and women's facilities
- Add a covered or sheltered area between the bus and the waiting area before security
- Use warmer, more inviting paint colors
- Make bathrooms accessible and comfortable
- Provide furniture to facilitate visiting
 - Install smaller visit tables and remove Plexiglas dividers, starting with the women's facility
 - Change furniture to facilitate privacy
 - Equal height amongst all chairs and tables to prevent an unequal dynamic between visitors and detained people



RECOMMENDATIONS: INFORMATION

Ensuring visitors are better informed

- Provide easily accessible information through handbooks, information videos, PowerPoint presentations, and pamphlets on community-based services
- Post clear signage throughout facilities, including visiting areas
- Place a list on the lockers of materials that are not permitted so visitors know as soon as they reach the Island what must be discarded or placed in the locker
- Update the DOC website
- Hang posters informing visitors of their rights in visit areas and include information about how to contact the Board when rights are violated
- Communicate with visitors about lock downs or other reasons for visit delays
- Provide visitors who are subjected to pat-frisk searches with an explanation of their rights, and information needed to be able to make a complaint



RECOMMENDATIONS: ACTIVITIES

Engaging detainees, visitors, and communities

- Offer once per week family movie time with detained people as a reward and incentive
- Involve providers of services to children with incarcerated parents in the planning and design of efforts to promote parent-child interaction
- Host special visiting events so that staff/programs can interact with families
- Implement birthdays of the month with cake for detained people



RECOMMENDATIONS: OPERATIONS

Policy/practice changes

- Provide visits every day and on weekends and lengthen allotted visit time
- Provide a way for people to earn back contact visits; reduce the use of non-contact visits as punishment for small infractions
- Consider searching children differently than adults
- Eliminate K-9 unit search or keep at distance from children
- End the use of fingerprinting or make it clear that the participation is optional and visitors will not be denied a visit opting out
- Increase searches of correction officers and/or enforce searching correction officers to reduce contraband entering Rikers



RECOMMENDATIONS: OPERATIONS

Staffing

- Train visit staff on how to interact with visitors so people feel respected, and inform them about the relationship between visiting and reduced violence
- Assign visit staff based on their capacity to interact with the public in a courteous manner. Remove staff from these posts when they behave discourteously
- Recognize positive customer service by having an "officer of the month" award
- Ensure visit staff are informed of changes to both DOC directives and BOC standards
- Ensure Visit Greeter positions are fully staffed. Consider recruiting individuals who are sensitive to the needs of visitors



RECOMMENDATIONS: DATA REPORTING

Tracking and reporting data

- Track and report on the number of children (people under 16) who visit
- Track usage and qualitative feedback from visitors about visiting bus
- Increase camera coverage, including in the Perry Control Building
- Launch an independent and transparent investigation into allegations of sexual abuse and strip searches
- Track and publish quarterly numbers of sexual abuse complaints by visitors

RECOMMENDATIONS

New models and innovative approaches

- Develop an interactive or mobile-phone-based visit scheduling system that allows family members to alert each other about upcoming visits and coordinate consistent visits together
- Online portal that shows where the loved one is located
- Video chatting vs. in-person visits
- Use video visits as adjunct (not substitute) with teachers, counselors, religious leaders, *etc.*
- Improve ways to notify people of visits—perhaps a digital banner?
- DOC uses a fully digitized system of intake, location of residence, court dates, visitation scheduling, *etc.*
- Give detained people access to text messaging services. The access can be offered in the library.

AGENDA

1. Welcome and goals for the day
2. Focus on visits
 1. DOC shuttle pilot
 2. Strategies for improving visits: recommendations
3. **Closing and next steps**